Savage Grace

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/879378.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warnings:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings, Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Hannibal Lecter Series - All Media Types, Hannibal (TV), Hannibal - Fandom
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, hannigram, Hannibal/Will
Characters:	Hannibal, Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham, Jack Crawford
Additional Tags:	Creature Fic, Priest!kink, Blasphemy, Werewolf, Werewolf!Hannibal, AU, Smut
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2013-07-11 Completed: 2013-07-16 Words: 8,710 Chapters: 5/5

Savage Grace

by hannibalmontanabal

Summary

Will comes across a new animal that seems to chase away his nightmares, but quickly comes to find that night terrors may be the least of his worries.
Hannibal is both a priest and a werewolf.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Butchers and Blasphemy

You could say that Will Graham had at his beck and call an army of domesticated wolves. He was a collector, and in his pack, he was the unchallenged leader. His animals made him feel secure, and he considered his dogs to be his family, as well as his home.

He gave them shelter. Fed them, and kept them safe and content. In return they offered him peace when the nightmares threatened to drag him down to the depths of his own quietly unraveling mania.

Most of his pets were strays. Some of them he had found when they were sniffing around garbage bins in the city; homeless drifters who only needed to be shown some small token of kindness and warmth in order to accept Will as their master. Others, such as Winston, Will had stolen away into the night, uncaring that they already belonged somewhere. To someone.

A few times Will would come across a missing dog poster, usually drawn in crayons or colorful markers, with a picture of one of his many collected companions. Will would take the poster down and stuff it into his pocket, frowning slightly at the subtle itching nag of his conscience.

He felt empathy for the dog owners he took from. He felt their adoration and longing for their lost pets, but sympathy he did not feel. If they loved their dogs so much, they wouldn't have let them wander the streets at night.

An animal that Will could catch was an animal that Will could claim. He could admit that it was a tad obsessional.

He awoke with a start, bleary-eyed and gasping in the humid darkness, ripping the blankets off of himself in a panic. He felt suffocated and terrified, momentarily mistaking the slick sweat on his skin for blood. His dampened shirt clung to him, and his hands shook slightly as he awkwardly struggled to pull it off, clawing at the fabric and stretching it as he tugged the shirt over his head and threw it to the floor.

In the back of his mind was the cool breath of death and decay.

One of the animals lifted its head in curiosity, sniffing the air. Its black eyes gleaming amidst a sea of warm and breathing fur in the darkened room.

Will quietly waited for his pulse to slow, listening to the wind howl outside. At least, he thought it was the wind. The sound tugged at Will's paranoia slightly, clawing at the anxious recesses of his mind. He couldn't help but listen to the mournful sound; it rang deep in the marrow of his bones.

After some time had passed and his nerves calmed slightly, he let his eyes flutter closed. He was at the edge of another dream, this one decidedly more pleasant and inviting, when his

phone rang and dragged him from what would have been a deep sleep. He groaned and clumsily felt around for his glasses before looking at his phone to see who was calling him at four in the morning. He already knew, of course.

Jack Crawford's name appeared on the screen, and Will sighed. No one else ever called Will; Will was only useful when there was a particularly gruesome murder. Only worth his ability to see beyond blood to the motivated violence that had spilled it. Another comfort the dogs provided was giving a Will a sense of being needed. More than that, his dogs made him feel wanted.

"Hello Jack." Will grumbled softly into the receiver, his voice husky with sleep.

"Will, listen. I know it's early, but I think you'd better come down here. It looks like the Ripper's work." There was a pause. Jack was waiting for Will to reply. Will would not. "I'll have Bev text you the address. Get your ass down here." There was a click, and Will knew Jack had hung up.

"It's always a pleasure talking to you, Jack." Will mumbled to no one.

He made sure to feed the dogs before stepping out the door, not having bothered to feed himself, and he watched them with a twinge of longing before he walked out into the chilly night air.

As he pulled his keys from his coat pocket to unlock his car door, he had the unmistakable feeling of being watched. The feeling didn't shake until Will was on the high way.

As soon as Will arrived at the crime scene, Jack was approaching his car in a hurry. When Will parked, Jack was already tapping on the glass of the car window and Will sighed in irritation as he opened his door. He preferred to be afforded the time to allow himself a moment to collect his thoughts before looking over the evidence. It was easier to separate himself from the murderer that way. But Crawford was electrified in the hope that this might be the Ripper, so Will would have to throw himself into the killer's mind without any preparation.

Jack didn't say anything as they approached the butcher shop. It was dark inside as Jack pulled open the door. Will's eyes quickly adjusted as he took in what horrors had happened here. Jack had said something but Will was too absorbed to listen.

"What?"

"Are you with me Will?"

"Yeah. Yes. It's definitely the Ripper."

"I figured. I'll uh.. Leave you two alone." At that, Jack instructed everyone to leave the scene so Will could work his magic. A few FBI agents straggled behind to watch with morbid

curiosity, and Jack shooed them away.

The Ripper overcame what was left of Will Graham, and the pendulum swung in time with Will's heart beat. Everything played in reverse, and Will watched it play before him.

"You are a pig set up for the slaughter- nothing but an ignorant animal. When I am done with you, you will become the canvas for my art. I will make a masterpiece of you, not because you deserve to become something beautiful, but because I want to impress. I am an artist among men, and you will see my true face.

"I grab him by his hair from behind and slam his face into the cold steel of the table. He is stunned but not unconscious. I want him awake so he can feel the repercussions of offending me. And he has offended me.

"I take him into the back and stick a hook into the fat scruff of his neck. I watch him struggle for a moment, watch him dangle and watch the blood drain from his face before I go to grab my artist's tools. His knives are impressive and sharp, and they will add a kind of poetic satire when I use them against him. I make sure that he sees me as I put blade after blade into his flesh. Cleavers and carving knives serve me well. I rip apart his rib cage as though I were tearing into a pomegranate. His screams are a welcome soundtrack.

"There's... Love. Affection. But not for the rude pig I'm killing. This is for *someone. I'm showing off for someone. But will they acknowledge the extent of effort I put into this? Will they appreciate my gift to them? Time will tell.*

"I am careful not to make a mess. That would be... unrefined. The blood and the carnage is to make a show of what a hideous disgrace this swine is. I remove his heart and cut out the choice cuts of meat only after he has truly suffered and is dead. Now he is nothing but a slab of meat. I take more than I need to feed myself. I am not dining alone."

Will snapped back into himself abruptly, unable to look any more. He staggered out of the butcher shop. gasping into the fresh air, the cold of which stung his lungs. Jack offered a hand for stability and Graham flinched, shying away from the touch. Still unsure of what was himself and what was the Ripper.

"What did you see?"

"He's showing off for someone. Maybe they know who.. what he is, maybe they don't, I'm not sure. But he isn't just eating them himself, Jack, I think he's feeding them to someone. Someone he feels affection for. Also I noticed something strange. There was an animal bite on the butcher's thigh. It looked like a big animal took a chunk out of him. Maybe the Ripper has a pet?"

"That could give us something to look for." Jack said thoughtfully.

When Will closed his eyes, he saw the Ripper's newest masterpiece behind his eyelids. He tried not to blink until his eyes stung.

Will got into his car and let out a heavy exhale, trying to relax. He wanted to see the Ripper more clearly, but couldn't quite fit it together. The Ripper was like a scattered puzzle. Not that many pieces missing, but a few extra pieces that didn't fit anywhere.

He pulled out onto the highway, but not to return home just yet. Graham wanted to see his priest.

Will opened the great wooden doors of the cathedral and coughed at the dust that glittered in the morning sunlight. He looked around as he sank into one of the pews. He was alone.

The chapel always smelled vaguely of incense and candle wax, and there was something calming in the way the light hit the stained glass windows. A painting of the Virgin Mary stared down at him with forgiving eyes, and Will stared at the floor. It might have looked as though he were praying. He was not.

Will Graham was not a religious man by any means. But there was something that struck Will as beautiful in Catholic rituals. Every so often, Will would wander in like a lost lamb and sit in the back during Sunday Mass, watching the devout church goers with a sort of reverent awe as they sang hymns and muttered their prayers into their rosary beads.

"*Praise be to God."*

"The Lord be with you."

"And with your spirit."

"In the name of the Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit."

"Amen."

"Ah, Will. To what do I owe the distinct pleasure?" Father Lecter's voice echoed somewhere from behind. Will had not heard his footsteps.

"Good morning, Father." Will said, turning with a shy smile. The priest walked forward and stood beside him. "I hope I'm not imposing, I was just on my way home from a crime scene and I thought I would visit."

"No imposition at all, dear Will. I was just about to eat breakfast if you would care to join me."

Father Lecter would often share his meals with Will, though Will wasn't certain that that was really allowed. He stole pleasure from their visits, and from the fact that Lecter seemed to genuinely enjoy his company. Not many people seemed overly enthusiastic about keeping Will Graham around, and he knew that it was because he lacked certain social graces. He

wasn't sure why a devout and intelligent man like Father Lecter was always so happy to see him, but it made Will feel special just the same.

The priest handed Will a tupperware container with a protein scramble, and Will only stabbed at it, the meat reminding him of the dead butcher. Father Lecter seemed to notice that Will wasn't eating, and frowned, but said nothing.

"I think the Ripper is feeding his victims to someone. Someone he cares about." Will said, breaking the comfortable silence between them.

"Will, that isn't really an appropriate topic of discussion to have when we are eating breakfast." Lecter said, and Will looked down in shame.

"Sorry. You're right." Will said softly. The priest looked at him a moment, then smiled.

"So you think he has a friend? Or perhaps a lover? Do you suppose they know that he is a serial killer?"

Will would often discuss cases with Father Lecter, and the priest always offered a great deal of insight, filling in the gaps of what Will was missing. Lecter rarely seemed to have anything fresh to offer on the topic of the Ripper, however. He seemed as lost about it as Will, and usually only offered Will information he already knew.

As they spoke, Will would occasionally sneak glances at the priest. He felt guilty for being attracted to a man of God, but he couldn't help it. Father Lecter seemed vaguely aware of Will's attraction to him, and yet did not shun him for it. Will wondered if there would have been any chance for romance between them if Hannibal weren't a clergyman.

Sometimes Will would go home and fantasize about the priest, imagining himself going into the confessional booth and admitting his lust. He liked to imagine that Father Lecter would ask for the intimate details about Will's passions, and Will would tell him everything. They would both dance around the subject and make it into a dirty game, and Hannibal would get off to Will's confession. Will often wondered what Father Lecter would sound like if he moaned. Imagined that he would taste like Communion wine and fire.

"Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned."

"Did you say something?" Will asked, blushing as Father Lecter stared at him.

"I said that you don't look well. You're sweating. What's on your mind?"

"I was just thinking about the Ripper. And a nightmare I had last night." Will muttered, feeling his face grow even warmer. "I should get back to my dogs. Thank you, Father."

"Of course, Will. Thank you for coming to see me, though I fear I was little help to you today. Why don't you take that with you? You hardly ate any of it."

"Oh, yeah. Thank you." Will stood awkwardly and began to make his way towards the doors.

"Perhaps I will see you Sunday, Will." The priest called. Will didn't answer, too ashamed of the erection straining in his pants.

That night, Will awoke to find himself standing outside of his front door. It was open behind him, and his head ached. He had dreamed about the butcher, and as his mind raced towards consciousness, he could still hear the man's screaming ringing in his ears.

He shivered in the cold, and a dog stepped out of the house and brushed against his leg. He looked down and gasped. This was not one of Will's animals. In fact it looked much more like a wolf than a dog, only it was quite a bit larger than Will imagined a wolf might be. It stared up at him with it's inquisitive maroon eyes and sniffed at him. He cautiously extended his hand to pet it, and it let him, pushing into the touch.

The animal's fur was thick and grey with occasional darker patches. It's teeth were enormous and sharp, and Will staggered backwards when he caught sight of them, nearly tripping through the door frame. The animal followed him inside, and Will watched all of the other dogs shy away from it with ears down and their tails tucked between their legs. It was the most dominant creature in the household, and Will wondered why it had come.

Exhaustion tugged at his mind and stopped him from questioning too much. Slowly Will dragged his feet upstairs to his bedroom. The beast followed and then walked ahead of him, resting at the foot of his bed.

Will crawled under the covers, dreading more horrific nightmares, or worse, sleepwalking again. But he was too tired to try to struggle to stay awake.

He tried to think of something pleasant, and thought of Father Lecter. Will imagined running his fingers through the priest's hair and kissing him. Fucking him on the altar.

He let his hand slide under the waistband of his boxers and lazily stroked himself.

He imagined himself on his knees in the confessional booth, his head between Father Lecter's legs. He moaned softly into the darkness, biting his lip gently.

"Oh, oh, Hannibal." Will breathed, and the beast's ears perked slightly. Will sighed, deciding that he was too tired to keep masturbating. He pulled his hand out of his boxers and rolled over, hugging his pillow. "I'm going to hell." He muttered, shutting his eyes. He could feel the cold gaze of the beast, and was thankful that he was too exhausted to care. Will drifted to sleep quickly, and the animal did not stop watching him until the sun began to rise.

When Will woke, he smiled in pleasant surprise. He realized that he couldn't remember any of his dreams, but he was fairly certain that none of them were nightmares. He did not wake in a cold sweat, and did not see death when he closed his eyes.

For once, Will was well-rested. The beast was no where to be found, neither in the house nor outside of the property.

Blood of Christ and Bane of Man

Chapter Summary

Will makes his move, and Hannibal makes his.

Over the following week, Will would come to find that the beast would continue to enter his home somehow. It didn't matter if the door was open or not, somehow it seemed to just fabricate whenever it saw fit. It only came after the sun had set, and always left before daylight touched the edges of the sky. It would watch Will silently, wait for him to go to bed, and then watch him sleep. It was unnerving, but Will was afraid to chase the creature away.

Will would attempt to feed it, but it always refused to eat what Will would offer it. The animal would only stare up at him with its hollow burgundy gaze that set Will's nerves on fire.

When it moved, it made no sound. It did not growl or bark or whimper, but Will would come to know its distinct blood-curdling howl that rang into the woods when it was not inside.

The other dogs kept out of its way, bowed their heads at it and averted their eyes when it would walk past. The beast never did anything overtly threatening, never bit or snapped at Will or the other dogs, but in its eyes hid something wild and violent that made the air a little thicker.

Will did not call this animal by a name, for it was not his. He could not make claim to it, as he had with the other dogs. 'The Beast' was how he thought of it, and it came and went in the night as it pleased. Will felt more that he was the beast's pet than it was his. Every night that it watched over him, however, Will slept peacefully. He decided that he could grow accustomed to its constant disappearing and reappearing so long as it continued to chase his bad dreams away.

Will rose from his bed and was surprised to meet its cool gaze. It seemed as though the animal never slept, simply watched him with unblinking attention. He shivered and walked down to the kitchen for a glass of water. The beast followed him closely behind, watched him drink, and then they walked back up the stairs. Part of Will wanted to lock the creature out of his room so that he could sleep without being watched. However, he worried that if he did that, the beast would not return to him again. He wasn't even sure what the creature wanted. Why it showed up at all. It didn't want what Will would try to feed it, didn't have any interest in the company of the other dogs, and it didn't seem to even care much for being near Will. Will didn't think he provided it with anything.

As he crawled into bed again, he glanced at the enormous animal staring at him with eerie intensity from the side of his bed. It made him uneasy; he felt like it was waiting to eat him

alive.

"What do you want from me?" Will muttered. It licked its chops and Will grimaced. He leaned over and pet its snout, and it rested its head on the bed, looking at him curiously. He fell asleep stroking its fur, and for the first time in a week, he dreamed.

In his dream, Father Lecter came to his bedside and smiled down at him. The priest took Will's hand into his own and kissed his knuckles.

"Sweet Will." The priest whispered affectionately, sitting on the edge of the bed.

"I want you." Will said, bolder in his dream than in reality. Father Lecter nodded.

"Yes. I can smell your lust even now." The priest pulled Will to himself so that Will's head rested comfortably in his lap. "You have the most intriguing heart. For whom does it beat, I wonder?"

Will did not answer, instead allowed his hands to trace circles along the priest's thigh. Lecter bent to press a kiss to Will's jaw, but Will turned his head and their lips grazed against each other. Will heard Lecter's breathing stagger, and decided to use the man's momentary surprise to his advantage. He pulled the priest down into a kiss and was pleased to find that the priest did not pull away, instead kissed back with a kind of fevered passion. Will moaned softly, and Lecter broke the kiss, panting slightly.

Will shut his eyes and pressed his face into the priest's leg with a contented sigh.

When he opened his eyes, he realized that Father Lecter was not really there. Instead, the beast was in his bed and Will had curled against it in his sleep. It stared back at him and then silently jumped off of the bed and left the room. Will stared after it, disoriented and confused. It had never gotten on the bed before, and it never stayed until morning. He sighed and glanced at the clock. It was almost seven. He put on his glasses and decided that he would go to church.

When he walked into the kitchen to make a pot of coffee, he realized that the animal was gone again. He heard it howling in the distant woods, then there was uncomfortable silence.

Father Lecter spotted Will, and smiled at him as he spoke. Will didn't really listen to the sermon. Instead he fidgeted and squirmed in his seat, and stared at the priest with anxious longing. He wasn't sure why he tortured himself by coming here. All he could do was steal lustful glances at man he could never hope to have.

But Will wanted to tell someone about the animal that crept into his home at night, and Father Lecter was honestly the only person Will considered to be a friend.

Will waited after Mass was over and everyone had walked out of the building, bending at the knee and crossing themselves with holy water. He approached the priest, and Lecter smiled warmly at him.

"Hello Will, it's nice to see you."

"Good morning, Father. It was a nice service today."

"But you don't come for the sermons." The priest said softly.

"No." Will swallowed, eyes scanning Lecter's face nervously, wondering how much the priest knew. He couldn't help but let his jaw drop slightly when he noticed that Father Lecter's eyes were a deep maroon color, much like the beast's. He hadn't noticed before.

"Anything new on your Ripper?"

"No, I don't think he'll make any moves just yet. It wouldn't fit his pattern." Will said. The priest nodded thoughtfully. "It was strange, though. The last victim was bitten by a large animal. Like the Ripper has a pet or something. I just can't imagine that sort of person with an animal, it's out of character."

"Do you have a dog, Will?" The priest asked. Will laughed.

"I have twelve." Will said. "Actually, recently I found a new dog. Or, I guess I should say it found me. I think it's some kind of wolf-mix, I can't tell. It just comes into my house at night and watches me sleep and I can't figure out why. I don't know where it goes in the mornings, but whenever it comes to me, I don't dream." Will wiped a hand over his face to cover his blush. "Except for last night, any way."

"You have nightmares without its company?"

"I do."

"Did you have a nightmare last night? Despite the creature's presence?"

"Ah, no. The dream I had last night was a good one. But when the beast is in the room and watching me sleep, I usually don't dream at all." Will hadn't called it 'the beast' aloud before, and the priest seemed to flinch slightly at the word.

"That's very interesting. How do you feel about this beast being in your home, with your other pets?"

"I don't know. It makes me.. uneasy, but it's nice to wake up well-rested. I can't think of it as a pet. I don't feel like it's mine, and I don't know what it wants."

"Perhaps it wants only to comfort you. It sees that you have been troubled, and it seeks to bring you peace."

"You bring me peace, Father."

There was silence between them, and Will wanted to run out the door. He knew he had said too much, and overstepped some invisible boundary. Memories of his dream stirred an urging want to flirt with the priest, and he knew this was not wise. He didn't want his attraction to cost him the only real friend he had.

"I should go." He said finally, stuffing his hands into his pockets.

"Will." The priest said softly, his tone stopping Will from moving. "You haven't offended me. Stay."

"It's inappropriate, what I feel. What I want." Will said quietly, his heart racing.

"It's not uncommon for one to have romantic or sexual inclinations towards one's priest. Similarly, one may experience attraction to one's psychiatrist. Those who offer comfort and are also unobtainable." The priest's words resounded through the walls of the cathedral and hummed hope into Will's chest.

"Common or not, it doesn't change what I feel or how difficult it is." Will turned to go again, wanting to drown out his urge to break all the boundaries and rules, and to reach out and kiss the priest, if only to see how far he could get before God smote him where he stood.

"I understand. But I'd like for you to stay. Your company brings me equivocated joy." Will was already walking away, and Father Lecter grabbed his arm to stop him. Will gasped softly, the sound echoing. "Will."

"Hannibal." Will turned to face the priest, and forced himself to keep his gaze. Their faces were close. Will could have only leaned a few inches and kissed Father Lecter. He stayed where he was, determined not to make the first move.

"If you must know, I cannot deny that the feelings you have are mutual."

Will blinked, holding his breath.

"I guess I should feel bad, then. For corrupting you."

"The corruption is my own doing, but I enjoy the company."

"Kiss me." Will said after a moment of debating, and the air between them seemed to electrify as the priest leaned forward and took Will's chin in his hand and closed the space with a kiss. Will groaned deeply in his throat despite himself, and bit down too sharply on the priest's lip. When he pulled back, he could taste blood in his mouth.

"Body of Christ."

"Blood of Christ."

"I'm s-sorry." Will stammered, looking at the blood beading delicately on Lecter's lower lip. He stared in a rapture when Hannibal licked the blood away, eyes never straying from Will's face.

Will had fled then, not sure of what else to do. He had seduced a priest, and yet no lightning struck him, and no hell fire pursued him. He ran out to his car and did not look back, sweating and shaking and feeling a familiar mixture of guilt and arousal as he drove away from the church he had single-handedly tainted.

That night, Will waited for the beast. It did not show up, and he stood on his porch and stared out at the moonless sky for hours, feeling empty and alone.

He did not sleep that night, afraid of the monsters in his mind. Instead he drank whiskey and thought of the priest- his priest.

As the sun rose, Will thought that maybe he should try to sleep. As he began to climb the steps towards his bedroom, his phone rang.

"Will, the Ripper's broken his pattern. And this one's got another bite." Said Jack Crawford sternly.

"I'll be right there." Will answered, sighing in defeat and pulling a hand through his hair.

As he stepped out his door, he thought he saw the beast walking through the woods, but he couldn't be certain.

Breath and Bone

Chapter Summary

Smut!

Jack stood by Will as they stared at the body. It made Will tense, how close Crawford was standing. He exhaled heavily through his nose and pinched his eyes closed. It felt like the shadow that followed him was not his own, but the Ripper's. The Ripper followed him through the crime scene, but did not overcome him. Will couldn't get a handle on what happened here. It was just an abstract pile of senseless gore.

This one was violently strewn all over the place, riddled in animal bites and only a few tell-tale signs that the Ripper had been here. Will was starting to doubt that this was the Ripper at all. He wasn't following his previous pattern and he hadn't had an animal with him in his previous killings. Or if he did, he didn't let it make a mess of his victims post-mortem. But everything else fit, and Will *felt* the Ripper here. Or, he thought he did. He couldn't be sure any more, and he could no longer trust himself. His confusion and self doubt clouded his ability to put things together.

"Well, what do you see?" Jack asked, eyes scanning Will's face. he could see that Will was barely there, tired and lost in himself. Will shrugged with an exasperated sigh.

"I honestly don't know. I don't understand why he would be so meticulous up until now, and then decide to let his pet reek havoc on his hard work. His *artwork.* I.. I still think it's the Ripper, but I don't know. I can't see anything, jack, I'm sorry."

Still, Will continued to try to get a feel for things. Tried to feel what the Ripper had felt when he'd murdered this girl. A wave of frustration washed over him, and at first he thought it was his own, but then he realized.

"I think whoever he tried to impress with the last one.. I don't think they were impressed. They didn't appreciate what the Ripper tried to give them. To show them. This is his acting out. This is his way of being petulant."

"This is him losing a grip, then? He's not acting with caution, he's letting his anger get the best of him." Jack said, eyes lighting up with hope.

"If things don't resolve with whoever he's trying to communicate with, whoever he's feeding his victims to, I think we'll have another body fairly soon."

"Not if we can find any evidence that he was too reckless to cover up."

Will left the scene feeling kind of hollow. Jack had hope that the Ripper had slipped somehow. Will didn't think so. Even in the Ripper's irritation with whoever it was that he was showing off for, he wouldn't get so careless as to leave any traces of himself behind. The Ripper was much more calculating and clever than to really let his irritation get the better of him. He'd smear the walls with the blood of his victim and feed it to his dog, but it was still an art piece. Just one that told of his frustration.

Still, artists cannot help but to put pieces of themselves into their creations. They put their emotions and ideals and experiences into what they do, and if the Ripper was putting passion into it now, he would be sure to slip up eventually. Will would be there to catch the Ripper when he fell. He just hoped that there wouldn't be many more Ripper victims who would have to pay the ultimate price, simply because Will couldn't quite keep up; just because Will was too insolent to see the Ripper sooner.

He considered driving to the cathedral to visit Father Lecter, but shuddered with embarrassment at the thought. He had willingly desecrated a place of worship, and though the priest had admitted to returning Will's affection, Will felt ashamed of himself for wanting. He couldn't follow through with it and still be able to look at himself in the mirror.

He returned home and threw himself onto the mattress without even bothering to change his clothes. He dreaded the thought of trying to face down his nightmares alone, without the beast there to bring him sanctuary from the demons that stubbornly clung to his pillow. Will was too exhausted, both mentally and emotionally, to continue to try to stay awake for much longer, though. He would just have to suck it up.

The bright sunlight and the birds that chirped outside seemed to mock him for having avoided sleep the night before. Still, it didn't take very long after he closed his eyes and let his muscles relax.

When he opened his eyes again, it didn't feel as though he had slept at all, but the sky above was black and riddled with stars. He realized that Father Lecter was shaking him by the shoulders, his expression concerned.

"Will." The priest said sternly, and Will blinked, realizing that his feet were sore and his socks torn from walking through the woods.

"Father Lecter?" Will groaned, pulling away slightly to get his bearings.

"I came to see you and found you wandering alone outside of your home. Did you lose time?"

"Yes, I.. Wait, how do you know where I live?" Will asked, groggy and dazed.

"Because you told me, Will. Are you quite alright?"

"I don't know." Will confessed, and the priest allowed Will to lean on him as they walked the short distant back to Will's house. Will looked around, and saw no car other than his own. He wondered how Father Lecter had gotten there, but was too disoriented to ask.

They walked through the door, which Will had left open, and Will looked around for the beast. He realized that he felt somewhat disappointed that it was no where to be found. He wondered if it would ever return again or if perhaps it had found a more accommodating home.

"Will, I-" Father Lecter began, but Will silenced him by stepping forward and kissing his throat. The priest swallowed, wrapping his arms around Will and stroking patterns into Will's shirt. Will pressed his palms into the priest's chest and gasped when he felt just how strong the older man's heart beat was. It pounded against the heels of Will's hand, steady and slow. The priest smiled at Will's being temporarily distracted and caressed Will's cheek.

"Is this wrong?" Will asked quietly, looking up into Father Lecter's face. He didn't want it to be. He wanted reassurance that this was fine and that they wouldn't be condemned to an eternity in hell for this.

"It is." The priest muttered tenderly into Will's ear, his breath warm. "Do you think God will begrudge us, dear Will? Would he find it vulgar, my wanting you? I think you would be worth eternal damnation."

Will bit his lower lip to stifle his own moan. His eyes fluttered closed and the next thing he knew his back was pressed against the wooden door frame.

Strange that the man Will had been so afraid of tainting was in complete control now. No debating of morals or shaming of sins of the flesh. The priest was already working at Will's belt, easily unbuttoning his pants and whispering arousing yet vile things into Will's ear.

Lecter's mouth crashed against Will's for only a moment and it left Will breathless as the priest led him by the hand upstairs.

How do you know where my bedroom is?

The priest pushed Will down onto the bed and Will watched him quickly and gracefully undress. Suddenly, he was just a man. Just a person like any other. Flesh and blood and bone, vices and sin and breath. Will pulled him down and claimed his mouth once more, and Hannibal moaned just the way Will had thought he would. It was a beautiful and holy sound, and Will knew then that he belonged to Hannibal, body and soul.

"...like a sacrificial lamb, sweet Will." Will thought he heard the priest murmur against his clavicle as he came with a sob, but he couldn't be sure he had heard correctly over the sound of his own keening.

Will woke calmly as the sun was rising, and he watched Hannibal sleep for a while. He realized that so long as his priest was with him, he didn't need the beast. His dreams were warm and welcoming despite his mortal sins. He pressed his ear to Hannibal's chest and fell asleep once again to the heavy thrum of the priest's heart beat, warmed by the heat of the man's skin.

"Now I lay me down to sleep

I pray the Lord my Soul to keep

If I die before I wake

I pray the Lord

my Soul to take."

Beasts and Brutality

Will woke to find himself alone in his bed later in the morning. No beast, no priest. He wasn't entirely sure that what he remembered was even real.

He sprawled out in the bed and smiled softly to himself. the warm and earthy scent of Hannibal Lecter clung to the sheets. It had been real, after all. The sunlight filtered in delicately through the window and painted the bedroom in hazy gold. The birds chirping outside didn't feel mocking now, instead their songs were pleasant and added to Will's good mood.

He got dressed and fed his dogs. Sat on the floor with them and was sure to give each one extra affection. Winston in particular responded positively to the attention and proceeded to follow Will around the house as he went about the day. He even finished assembling some pieces of the boat motor which he had previously procrastinated working on. Winston sat at his feet and watched him with a serene and quiet contentedness.

He let the dogs outside for a while, and stood at the edge of his property, watching them dart through the trees, chasing small animals and barking excitedly.

He thought of the beast, and wondered at why it had left as suddenly as it had come. He wasn't sure that he missed it, really. When it was near, it made his skin crawl with apprehension. it brought a sense of impending doom every night that it had entered his home, and made the other dogs visibly uneasy. However, it had been there when Will had needed it. There was something about the mysterious animal that made Will feel safe. That if there had ever been an intruder or threat, the beast would have certainly defended him ferociously. Though it only stared into Will with its cold maroon eyes, he knew it cared about him in some strange way. Much in the way that he cared for his dogs.

He felt a raindrop splash against his cheek and looked up into the darkening sky. The wind had picked up and made the air chilly, but he had been too lost in thought to notice. he called the dogs in just before it started to pour.

Thunder boomed as he checked his phone. No calls from Jack, yet. This meant that they had either found something monumental at the Ripper's most recent crime scene and were too busy piecing the evidence together to notify Will, or more likely, they hadn't found anything.

Will sat on the couch and stared out the window at the rain. The comfort of the sound and the warmth of Winston laying at his feet made Will sleepy. The last thing he saw was the rain glittering against the glass of the window as he shut his eyes and drifted gently to sleep.

In his dreams, he found himself in a church quite unlike Father Lecter's. Here, no warm sunlight passed through the stained glass. The walls were dark crimson, and Will realized that they were painted in blood. At the altar stood the beast, its eyes bright red and its hide was black feathers rather than grey fur. It snarled viciously, fangs bared, and Will looked around himself to see that all of the Ripper's victims were mounted to the walls in place of crosses and statues of saints.

Will jumped as he felt Father Lecter's hand fall gently onto his shoulder.

"You." Will whispered, and he realized that it all fit. The priest and the Ripper were one and the same. "I was so blind, but I see you now."

"Yes, Will." The cannibal smiled, and somewhere in the distance a sad song played on the pipe organ as the voices of ghosts sang along to the wordless hymn. "What frightens you most?"

"How much I love you." Will answered, weeping. From his eyes fell tears of blood, and in his hands and feet were the same wounds suffered by Jesus.

"Stigmata." The priest smiled, stabbing a spear into Will's side. "My sweet Will, are you willing to become a martyr and take my sins and wickedness unto yourself?"

Will tried to answer, but only blood spilled from his lips. Drops of it splashed onto the priest's face, and he smiled as he licked it away.

"So on Earth as it is in Heaven."

Will woke with a violent scream that left his throat stinging and raw, and found himself standing in the cathedral, soaked through with rain. The priest stood before him, expression concerned and illuminated by the spilling moonlight, causing him to look like a marble statue or a virtuous saint. But Will could see beyond this, now. Knew that Hannibal Lecter was a cold blade of a man and had no sense of mercy or compassion.

"Will, are you quite alright? Did you sleepwalk here?" The priest asked softly, stepping towards Will and running his lithe fingers gently through his rain-drenched hair. Will stepped backwards with a hiss, and the priest seemed to understand, his expression hardening.

"I know what you are." Will whispered. "I know everything."

"I very much doubt that, dear Will. Just what is it that you think you know?"

"I know that you're the Ripper. You've been stringing me along this entire time." Will felt himself tremble, but he stood his ground and held the murderer's hard gaze. "I was just a puppet, wasn't I? You were just watching me dance, weren't you? Just playing with your food, Father?" Will felt the sharpened accusations cut through the air, and the cannibal smiled.

"Oh, Will. You are a deliciously cunning boy, but you don't know everything." At this, the priest stripped off his clothing and, once naked in the moonlight, transformed before Will's eyes from man to monster. The priest's hands became claws and he let loose an earth-shattering howl.

The beast now circled around Will carefully, and Will staggered backwards, too shocked to scream. His legs gave out beneath him and he fell onto his knees, as though in the position to pray. The beast breathed heavily somewhere behind him, sniffing him, and he knew his life

would end any moment. He felt dizzy and the room began to spin. He gripped the edge of the nearest seat until his knuckles whitened.

"No." He groaned, feeling the beast's tongue against the back of his neck. He attempted to stand but his legs quaked violently beneath him. "God, no."

"God has nothing to do with it." Hannibal said, catching Will in his arms just as he fainted.

"Hoc est inem corpus meum."

Beauty and Beast

Chapter Summary

> "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress…"

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, I shall fear no evil"

When Will came to, he was laid at the altar, the priest kneeling above him with smelling salts. Will groaned, his heart pounding so loudly in his ears that it gave him a headache.

"Will, are you going to be reasonable?"

"Are you going to kill me?"

"Are you going to give me a reason to?"

"That depends on what you would consider a reason, Father." Will spat the words, glaring up at the priest as he pulled himself into a comfortable sitting position.

"You should know that Jack Crawford and the rest of the FBI are on their way here, now." Father Lecter said calmly.

"You.. turned yourself in?" Will asked. The priest laughed darkly at this, and Will frowned in confusion.

"Goodness, no. No, Will, they're coming for you. I might have put some of your DNA at my most recent crime scene, and some nosy on-lookers spotted me in my alternative form. They'll assume that I am your pet, and that you are the Ripper you've been profiling."

"Then I wasn't hallucinating when you.." Will's voice trailed off and he put his hands over his eyes, as though it would help him to not see what he already knew, because what he knew was impossible. Father Lecter was both the Chesapeake Ripper, as well as the beast that had been stealing into his home at night. The only man Will had trusted was a monster in every sense of the word.

"I think that they will be coming for you quite soon. They may have received an anonymous call from a frightened priest, telling them that you are here holding me hostage. I told them that you confessed everything, and of course I have intimate knowledge about the Ripper that only you and I would know."

"Why are you doing this?" Will whispered from the cover of his hands. "When I trusted you? And I.. Oh my god. I let you into my home. I fucked you."

"Do you still lust for me?" Hannibal asked, his tone full of amusement. Will shook his head, and the priest tilted his head with a condescending smile. "There's no need to lie to me, dear Will."

"Why come into my home as an animal? Why watch me sleep night after night?"

"My kind feed on fear and negativity, and your nightmares were quite exquisite. I couldn't resist the temptation. You know, I briefly considered becoming a psychiatrist, more room to afford luxuries that way. But I find more sin and negative thinking in the confessions of the religiously devout than with the mentally insecure."

"Jesus." Will breathed, drawing his hand to his mouth and closing his eyes. He couldn't stop himself from shaking, and he felt Hannibal place a hand on his forehead. It was all he could do to keep himself from leaning in to the touch.

"Sweet Will, you have no reason to fear me." The priest whispered softly, pressing a kiss to Will's cheek, and Will realized that Hannibal was feeling his fear and feeding on it. He gently pulled Will's hand away from his mouth and leaned to kiss him, but Will pushed him away.

"Bestiality!" Will shouted, his voice echoing through the high ceiling. The priest laughed again.

"Ah, I see. So you would happily allow yourself to tarnish my reputation as a priest by taking me to bed, but now that you know what I can become, you would feel dirty to want me because you are offended by the thought of bestiality. I adore that about you, Will. You'd contaminate me and condemn me to hell, but you wouldn't want me to corrupt you. My dear boy, you're already corrupted. The very core of you is blackened around the edges." Will flinched at the words. They rang true. The priest again tried to kiss him and Will pushed him away, harder this time.

"What kind of monster are you?" Will demanded venomously. Hannibal straightened himself, sighing in mild agitation and looking at Will in seriousness.

"The kind who would loyally protect you in the night, and fight away the demons in your nightmares. The kind who would feed you and warm your bed. Who would kill more frequently than is wise, if only to impress you and to give your ravenous mind something to work on. The rest of the FBI is a mere chew toy, but you, oh remarkable you. You can see everything so clearly and so brilliantly with that beautiful mind of yours, can't you? I couldn't resist throwing you scraps and hearing my own thoughts on your tongue. I so loved watching you work that it became more addicting than killing. More satisfying than feeding on fear and misery. Your darkest desires played out before me like a symphony, written just for me. Why Will, you are the finest piece of art, the most beautifully written book I've ever indulged in the pleasure of reading."

Will fell silent so that the only sound between them was the rain beating against the stained glass and Hannibal's monstrous heart beat. This time when the priest leaned in to kiss him, he

didn't move away or put up any resistance. He shut his eyes and let his hands fall into place on Hannibal's shoulders. The priest sighed, seemingly satisfied in having won.

"You asked me what I wanted from you." The priest whispered against Will's parted lips. He dipped his tongue gracefully into Will's mouth, grazing his teeth momentarily before continuing. "All I ask is to have you. Your soul, Will. This is what I want, and if you would give it to me, I could protect you from your nightmares, as well as the FBI who hunt you now, like a wild animal."

Will thought about this, rising to his feet and backing himself against the wall. His fingers slowly reached for something, and he traced the cool metal of it before he spoke.

Outside he heard sirens, and he knew that he had to make his decision quickly.

"What would you have me do?" He asked, watching as the wolf in priest's clothing circled him, looking more like a predator than ever in the moonlight.

"Are you giving yourself up to me, then, my little lamb?" Hannibal whispered, closing the space between them. "All it would take is a bite to your throat, and you would become like me. We could exist together, kill together. One bite, and you would be mine." Hannibal pulled at the collar of Will's shirt, exposing his neck and smelling him. Will took his chance, and dug the sharpened end of a silver cross into the priest's shoulder. The priest staggered backwards, knocking down candles and setting the carpet ablaze. He roared, pulling the cross out of his skin before again transforming into the beast. Its maroon eyes held Will's, and the monster howled, exposing its dangerous fangs, which glistened in the dancing light of the flames.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega of Whom alone the end becomes beginning, and ends again at the original beginning without any break"

Will could hear Jack Crawford's voice outside, and he glanced up at the doors. The beast took it's opportunity and lunged forward, biting down hard on Will's shoulder. Will let out a scream in agony and terror, sinking to the ground as the animal backed away. He wan't certain whether the pain was worse, or knowing what he would soon become. He wished that he would die, but knew that the priest wouldn't allow that. He was to become a monster, too.

"Purify me, Lord, and cleanse my heart so that, washed in the Blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy eternal bliss."

Jack Crawford kicked down the door, and was too late to see Hannibal, poised to rip him apart. After all, Will would need to eat something soon, and Agent Crawford would suffice as a worthy meal.

"Amen"

End Notes

I'm not usually one for creature AUs but I had this idea nagging at me for a month and I had to get it down. Also I have a serious priest kink in the worst way so this is entirely self-indulgent.
Comments and kudos always appreciated!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!